

DDDS Legislative Task Force Created by SCR 62

Recommendations Submitted to the Task Force on behalf of the Structure and Leadership Subcommittee: Dr. Allan Zaback, Chair, Terri Hancharick, Sandra Hanley, Susannah Eaton-Ryan, Cindy Sterling, Lowell “LJ” Thomas, Lexie McFassel, Peter Ciamaricone, Emmanuel Asonganyi, Heather Ness and State Representative Kevin Hensley

Climate Work Environment

1. DDDS will conduct an annual climate survey of employees, which will be evaluated by the leadership team. The Division will develop and implement targeted “SMART” (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely) goals. The annual results will be reported to the Advisory Council.
2. DDDS will conduct exit interviews of employees who are leaving the Division, whether they are retiring or leaving to another job inside or outside of state government. Exit interviews provide a wealth of valuable information that can be used to improve operations as well as the work environment. The Division will identify trends. The results of exit interviews will be reported to the Advisory Council.
3. DDDS will respond to employee retention issues including the current Columbus Case Management 44% turnover rate. Identify and address the reasons for turnover. Work with the Department to conduct salary studies, work environment and other incentives for retaining employees.
4. DDDS will request information from the DHSS regarding climate survey regarding data from the Division that was used in the development of the Strategic Plan. Use this data to understand what problems exist and address those issues directly. Understand what underlying issues exist that impact morale.

Communication

5. Improve communications across the Division. The Division Director needs to promote communication throughout the Division so that all staff are aware of Division priorities, mission and vision. The lack of clear and/or regular communication creates confusion, uncertainty and can create an environment where rumors flourish.
6. Regarding communications for family members and agencies, the Division needs to do a better job with posting and sharing meeting minutes of public meetings.
7. Division needs to consider preparing a quarterly newsletter to be sent to families, via mail or e-mail. The purpose of the newsletter is to keep families updated as to Division activities and any changes in policy that will impact family members receiving services.

Division Structure

8. The Division needs to revisit its organizational structure, beginning with the system of Organizational Charts. For example, SIE has two charts; this is confusing to both internal and external members of the Division. The structure is not set up for follow-through, people mean well, but the process is still confusing to navigate.

Contracted Services and RFPs

9. The Division has outsourced a great deal of data. The Division needs to do a better job to ensure that its contractors have the resources necessary to do their job. If an RFP is going to be issued for contractors to deliver a service, it needs to be designed to meet the needs of any agency providing the service, i.e., the RFP must factor in ample resources in order to perform the job. At the same time, the Division needs to ensure that the agency with the successful proposal is able to fulfill the requirements of the RFP.
10. The Division needs to address the process for training new and existing providers. There is currently a problem with introducing new initiatives, strategic initiatives, etc. There are often too many initiatives introduced before an initial one gets completed.

(Case Management responsibilities shifted to Columbus. This move should have been discussed with providers and family members first. Columbus Navigators need to have the resources required to be effective in their role and to support the families they serve. Most Columbus Navigators and Case Managers don't have the contacts or know the resources their state case manager counterparts do. The net result is that family members are confused.)